

Appl. No. 09/986,689
Amendment dated July 10, 2003
Reply to Office Action of April 29, 2003

REMARKS

In the April 29, 2003 Office Action, claims 1-11 and 14-22 were rejected in view of prior art, while claims 12-13 were indicated as being allowed. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowance and the thorough examination of this application. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the April 29, 2003 Office Action, claims 1, 16, and 21-22 have been amended as indicated above. Also, claims 2, 14, and 19 were canceled in the previous Amendment filed on April 14, 2003. Thus, claims 1, 3-13, 15-18 and 20-22 are pending, with claims 1, 12 and 16 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

On pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 1-11 and 14-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,865,388 ("the Yeh patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,150,854 ("the Noda patent"). In response, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection in view of the following comments.

Independent claims 1 and 16 as now amended require that the harness connector or the harness connecting means be provided on a side of the reel body on which the rod mount or the rod mounting means is mounted. Applicant believes that one of ordinary skill in the art would not arrive at the arrangement of claims 1 and 16 based on the teachings of the Yeh patent and the Noda patent.

The Yeh patent discloses a dual-bearing reel 50 that is mounted to the fishing rod from below via the rod mount 26. As asserted in the Office Action, the Yeh patent

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does not disclose or suggest a harness connector. The Noda patent discloses a two-bearing reel that has harness clips 40 and 41, and is mounted to the fishing rod from above via the pole mount 20. Applicant believes that it would not occur to one of the ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of the Yeh patent and the Noda patent to arrive at the arrangement of claims 1 and 16.

First of all, Applicant believes that it would not occur to one of the ordinary skill in the art to attach a harness to a dual-bearing reel of a type that is mounted to the fishing rod from below. Dual-bearing reels of a type that is mounted to the fishing rod from *below* are generally small or medium reels, which the fisherman operates with his hands. On the other hand, reels of a type that is mounted to the fishing rod from *above* are generally large in size, as shown in the Noda patent. A harness is conventionally used in order to support the reel with the fisherman's body when the reel is too large for a fisherman hold only with his hands. Thus, a harness is conventionally used with large reels that are mounted to the fishing rod from above. With regard to small or medium reels, it is easier for a fisherman to use them by handling them with his hand, rather than attaching them to the body via a harness. In fact, it would be cumbersome if a harness is attached to a reel that is designed to be held by fisherman's hands. Thus, it would not occur to one of the ordinary skill in the art to attach a harness to a dual-bearing reel of a type that is mounted to the fishing rod from below.

Accordingly, it would not occur to one of the ordinary skill in the art to attach a harness to the dual-bearing reel of the Yeh patent, since the dual-bearing reel of the Yeh patent is of a type that is held by the fisherman's hand. As clearly indicated in column 2, lines 62-67, the dual-bearing reel 50 of the Yeh patent is designed to be used while being held with hands. Thus, it would be cumbersome to attach a harness to the dual-bearing reel 50 of the Yeh patent.

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The Office Action asserts that the description in column 2, lines 10-15 of the Yeh patent that a large force can be exerted on the fishing rod indicates a need for a harness. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion. The dual-bearing reel 50 of the Yeh patent is meant to be held by hands, as opposed to being supported on the fisherman's body, as discussed above. If a harness is attached to a dual-bearing reel that is designed to be held by hands, the harness will negatively affect the operability of such dual-bearing reel. Thus, Applicant believes that an ordinary skill in the art would not attach a harness to the dual-bearing reel, even to reinforce the attachment of the reel to the fishing rod.

The Noda patent, on the other hand, discloses a dual-bearing reel of a type that is supported on the fisherman's body and is attached to the fishing rod from *above*. As discussed above, the dual-bearing reel of the Noda patent has a rod mount at the bottom, and the harness connector at the top of the reel body. There is no suggestion that the dual-bearing reel be attached to the fishing rod from *below*, or that the harness connector and the rod mount be both provided on the same side of the reel body.

Thus, Applicant believes that it would not occur to one of the ordinarily skilled in the art to combine the teachings of the Yeh patent and the Noda patent to create the arrangement of claims 1 and 16.

Regarding dependent claims 3-11, 15, 17-18, and 20-22, they depend from claims 1 and 16. Since independent claims 1 and 16 are allowable, Applicant also believes that dependent claims 3-11, 15, 17-18, and 20-22 are also allowable over the prior art of record.

Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn in view of the above comments and amendments.

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Allowable Subject Matter

On page 1 of the Office Action, claims 12 and 13 were indicated as being allowed. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowance.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 3-13, 15-18 and 20-22 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Yoshio Miyagawa
Reg. No. 43,393

SHINJYU GLOBAL IP COUNSELORS, LLP
1233 Twentieth Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
(202)-293-0444

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